

Wycombe hold a lucky lead right to the end

Sports Mail Special Report

BIGGEST crowd of the season saw a dour North v. South struggle in the Amateur Cup Second Round clash between Wycombe Wanderers and the tough Northern League side, Penrith. With little to choose between the sides, Wycombe were a little lucky to take, after 24 minutes, a lead which they held to the end.

Wycombe Wanderers: Maskell; Bradshaw, Beck; Baker, Rundle, Gale; Roystone, Samuels, Bates, Horseman, Merrick.

Penrith: B Hodgson; Lewthwaite, Bousfield; Thornton, Wilson, Airey; Brian Hodgson, Clapperton, Storey, Brough, Rigg.

Referee: J W Wilkes (Solihull).

With the thaw making the pitch muddy over the frost and thickening fog threatening visibility, conditions were against skilful soccer and Penrith soon adopted a policy of swinging the ball from wing to wing.

The Wycombe wing halves were prominent in some lively midfield play.

Once they had settled down Wycombe began to secure more of the play but the Penrith defence gave little away.

Chance missed

Horseman went nearest after a good solo run but both sets of forwards found great difficulty in positioning for a shot at goal.

Merrick missed a chance for Wycombe when he ballooned the ball over the bar and at the other end Storey got in a shot that Maskell saved confidently.

Merrick was injured in a left wing clash but soon recovered and a little later, in the 24th minute, Wycombe took the lead surprisingly when a long kick from the left wing by ROYSTONE completely deceived goalkeeper B. Hodgson and soared into the back of the goal.

Wycombe were now well on top and Penrith had to pack their goal to keep them at bay. But Horseman, danger man of the attack, almost found the mark with one shot close in. Half-time: Wycombe W. 1, Penrith 0.

Brisk work

Penrith retaliated briskly in the second half, and after Maskell had punched away a corner kick inside right Clapperton almost found the mark in a powerful drive.

In spite of the worsening conditions both sides continued to try to play construc-

tive football, but few forward movements got within shooting distance.

Maskell, however, was tested once by the busy Clapperton, the liveliest of the Northerners' attack and at the other end a potential winner from Horseman was headed clear by right half Thornton.

Centre forward Storey had the best chance of the game for Penrith, but skidded in the mud as he tried to shoot into an open goal and Maskell had little difficulty in saving.

Wycombe, too, had bad luck when Bates headed into the goal only to see right back Lewthwaite hurl himself back to clear off the line, right under the crossbar.

The issue was still very much open as Penrith hit back again desperately. Rundle saved Wycombe dramatically with a last-minute tackle to stop Thornton and then a shot from Airey hit the crossbar.

RESULT:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| WYCOMBE WAN. | 1 |
| PENRITH | 0 |

Wycombe in hard battle

Wycombe 1 Penrith 0

NORTHERN LEAGUE challengers Penrith made Wycombe Wanderers fight all the way for their Amateur Cup second round victory in a dour clash before a crowd of 5,000.

Wycombe had slightly the better of the first half of a tough match on an icy pitch and crossed over a goal up. But in the end it was Penrith who mastered the conditions better.

Half-backs largely dominated play, and attacks fell short of the target as forwards skidded in the mud.

It was a speculative high centre from Roystone which deceived the Penrith defence to put Wycombe ahead in the 24th minute.

Only dangerman Horseman had really looked like piercing the close knit Northern defence.

With wing halves Thornton and Airey giving support to their attack, Penrith improved vastly in the second half after right back Lewthwaite had saved them by heading a shot from Bates off the goal line.

In a furious climax Wycombe were lucky to survive when Rundle robbed Thornton with a last-second clearance and again when a shot from Airey cannonned against the crossbar.